Greenland glosses over the political career of Clarke's father, the Honourable Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Clarke, a reform leader and former speaker of the Provincial Parliament. Greenland's conclusion, that C.K. Clarke's "antipathy to politics and politicians was, perhaps, inevitable" ("Origins," 21), follows from a faulty generalization, and is not born out by events. Colonel Clarke was a long-time friend and political ally of Joseph Workman (one of Colonel Clarke's daughters married one of Workman's sons) and it is through this connection that C.K. Clarke, in this regard not unlike Workman himself, became the latter's clinical assistant in 1874-5. Subsequently Clarke assisted Dr. William Metcalfe at the Rockwood Asylum in Kingston, his brother-in-law and himself a Workman disciple. Greenland paints an idyllic picture of the pair, finally free from ignorant rabble below and lay dictators above, "to test the theories they had so often discussed and ... to realize their ambitions in this new and important field of medicine called psychiatry" (9). The idyll is shattered on August 13, 1885, when they are attacked by a patient, Patrick Maloney. Metcalfe dies of his wounds, but Clarke defends himself successfully, thanks no doubt to his pioneer stamina.[lxxxii] Clarke succeeds his brother-in-law, as Medical Superintendent of the Rockwood Asylum, Kingston.

Greenland's "Origins of the Toronto Psychiatric Hospital" is essentially a rather misleading and, in historian Thomas Brown's sense of the word, "Whiggish" history of the development of the contemporary Clarke Institute.[lxxxiii] What Greenland calls "a tortuous path" (19), is so convoluted that one might suspect him of having tangled the "paths" of several projects begun with very different motives. Seeing these as one "path" and that a "progress" leading to the unqualified success in the creation of "a world-class psychiatric centre" is what makes Greenland's account such an egregiously flawed example of this kind of history. One effect of it here is to merely reproduce, or even to reinforce Clarke's own rhetoric, first by heroicizing his militancy as the "stalwart" leadership of an intrepid band of pioneers, second by practising Clarke's own rhetorical sleight of hand whereby measures are proposed in the name of people and institutions, and in the name only. Greenland characterizes Clarke's clinic as the "linchpin of the new mental health system" (21), a part of "the move from asylum to hospital" (22). If so, the only wheel it held in place was on Clarke's juggernaut. The vast majority of chronic patients, of "defective immigrants," of "degenerates," of "feeble-minded women," of "high-grade morons," to name but a few of Clarke's betes noires, the poor and the working poor, went nowhere. They were sacrificed.